

**CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS**

**UN/ECE Work Session on Statistical Metadata**  
(Washington, D.C., United States, 28-30 November 2000)

Topic (ii): Metadata modelling and terminology issues

**ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION**

Submitted by U.S. Bureau of the Census <sup>1</sup>

**I. BASED ON INVITED PAPERS (WORKING PAPERS 8, 9, 10, AND 11)**

**Issue #1**

A number of international standards for metadata registries are emerging. What will be the impact of new technologies, including XML?

**Issue # 2**

What should be done to adopt metadata standards within individual organizations? How should we develop/maintain the vision to support data access and integration capabilities within and across agencies?

**Issue # 3**

What are the most practical models for housing the various types of metadata? Statistical agencies have created their own models. Can the 11179 model be useful as a starting point or as a standard?

**Issue # 4**

Is the development of a single corporate metadata repository a reasonable goal for a statistical agency? For situations where this may not be reasonable, can the centralized coordination of local metadata repositories within the agency practically and successfully achieve the same goal?

**Issue # 5**

Related to Issue # 4, can the coordination of local metadata repositories, referred to in Working Paper Number 11 as a "Federation of Unique but Related Metadata Repositories", be useful for interagency as well as intra-agency metadata sharing?

**Issue # 6**

When administrative data are published as part of a national statistical program, the need for metadata to accompany the data rises dramatically. What metadata need to be provided and how can it best be collected without placing an undue burden on the source agencies providing the metadata?

**Issue # 7**

Statistical quality and metadata quality are inextricably intertwined. The quality related to a statistical product is determined by a number of factors, including product relevance, timeliness, accuracy, accessibility, interoperability, and coherence. What steps do statistical agencies need to take to ensure they produce metadata that describe as well as enhance these quality factors?

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**Issue # 8**

How can the Neuchatel Terminology complement other terminologies (e.g., the UN Glossary of Classification Terms, the Eurostat Concepts and Definitions Database (CODED), etc.) in the field of classifications?

**Issue # 9**

What is the relationship between metadata bases and databases? How closely should metadata be associated with the data to which they refer? For example, titles and value domains should be locked to the datasets they describe. On the other hand, data element definitions, questions, and survey procedures may apply to several databases and could be linked instead of locked to the data. How should these different approaches be practically implemented?

**II. BASED ON CONTRIBUTED PAPERS (WORKING PAPERS 12, 13, 14, 22, AND 23)****Issue # 10**

Taking into account the experiences of international statistical agencies in the development of integrated statistics, the National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia considers the development of a metadata system to be one of its primary tasks. Aside from the development of metadata standards, what steps need to be taken to create international corporate data warehouses?

**Issue # 11**

If we know the properties of statistical data, why is it so difficult to form a well-operating metadata structure? Why are the lists of stored metadata and the metadata structures so different in the different countries and statistical organizations? Why do we have to amend and modify the metadata structures that have worked for decades?

**Issue # 12**

What steps should be taken to use CLASET, designed by Eurostat, for organizations outside of Eurostat as a means of classifications data exchange?

**Issue # 13**

There are many issues associated with the choice of formats for documents that make statistical data available on the Internet. Are there good working examples of policies that currently exist in statistical offices with respect to providing formats for documents on the Internet?

**Issue # 14**

What steps should be taken to integrate metadata developed for specific applications, like the metadata-based system for electronic data collection from businesses used by Statistics Austria (E-Collect), with metadata used for other application in the processing cycle?